Literature and Psychology

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Tu' auf dich, Unterwelt der Leidenschaften:
Gestalten ihr, geträumt und doch empfunden,
Lasst eure Lippen heiss an meinen haften,
Trinkt Blut von Blut und atem mir vom Munde!

Brecht vor aus euren Zwielichtfinsternissen
Und schämt euch nicht der Qual, die euch umschattet.
Wer Liebe liebt, will nicht ihr Leiden missen,
Was euch verstört, ist's, was mich zu euch gattet.

Nur Leidenschaft, die ihren Abgrund findet,
Lässt deine letzte Wesenheit entbrennen,
Nur der sich ganz verliert, ist sich gegeben.

So flamm dich auf! Erst wenn duch dich entzündest
Wirst du die Welt in deiner Tiefe kennen:
Erst wo Geheimnis wirkt, beginnt das Leben.

--Stefan Zweig
Prelude to
Amok — Novellen einer Leidenschaft

IN THIS ISSUE

Minutes of the Fifth Annual Conference . . . . . .

Discussion of Professor Edel's three-level analysis of Willa Cather's The Professor's House

"Chaucer as Psychologist in Troilus and Criseyde," by John V. Hagopian .

An analysis which is largely on the second of Professor Edel's three levels, necessarily so because of the inherent impossibility of an approach through biographical data not inherent in the work itself. The author combines an unusual variety of experience in a comparatively brief career. A teacher of English in Wayne, Western Reserve, and Indiana Universities since 1946, he has also been a veterans counsellor and psychometrist, consultant on advertising, and research interviewer for surveys of public opinion and community mental health. He has written scholarly articles,

poetry, fiction, a television script, and book reviews. His paper on "A Psychological Approach to Shelley's Poetry" will appear shortly in American Imago.

Correspondence . . . . . .

Letters from Mr. Idelle Sullens and Professor William Rose, together with a report of the address by Professor Rose delivered at the Sixth Triennial Congress of the International Federation for Modern Languages at Oxford, England, last September.

Bibliography (XVII) . . . . . .

Including contributions from Professor William J. Griffin, Dr. Mabel Worthington, Dr. Ruth Adams, Dr. Merrill Moore, and the Bibliography Committee of the MLA Discussion Group on Literature and Science. — Bibliographical contributions, with comments, are still desired.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

"The Neurotic Heroine in Tennessee Williams," by C. N. Stavrou (University of Buffalo).

MINUTES

The fifth annual Conference on Literature and Psychology met at the Hotel Statler in New York City on Tuesday, December 28th, 1954, at 3:45 p. m. Carvel Collins opened the meeting as chairman, later turning over the chair to the secretary, Leonard F. Manheim. Pursuant to the tentative agenda, it was moved and unanimously carried that the Conference be continued for the next year or that it be constituted a Discussion Group pursuant to MLA rules. Ruth R. Adams, Stanley Holberg, and A. H. Steinberg were named as a Nominating Committee to recommend officers for the ensuing year. The continuance of LITERATURE AND PSYCHOLOGY as a quarterly journal under the editorship of the secretary, with Eleanor B. Manheim as associate editor, was approved.

Professor Edel then presented his Conference paper, "Willa Cather's The Professor's House: An Inquiry into the Use of Psychology in Literary Criticism" (which had appeared in full in LITERATURE AND PSYCHOLOGY, Vol. IV, No. 5, pp. 69-79). He pointed out the threefold development of his thesis: from the more or less conventional critical approach, to the "psychological" approach stressing the implications of the work itself in terms of the findings of depth psychology, ending in the approach through dynamic interpretation of biographical data in the author's life in terms of the work and its literary significance. The total effect was cumulative, but the final approach yielded the most valuable results. Professor Edel proposed certain changes and emendations in the text of the paper, most of which were designed to eliminate an excessive use of language and vocabulary peculiar to professional psychology but not of great utility in the hands of the literary critic.

Professor Green opened the discussion by asking whether The Professor's House was a "bad" novel because it was a neurotic novel. Is it proper to evaluate it thus? Professor Edel replied that he had not said anything of the kind. He had considered the general question, Why do writers write? Their problems may call novels into being. Such novels may be beautiful works of art. Deep troubles may produce, as in the present case, a somewhat asymmetrical work.

Professor Green called attention to "Carlyle, My Patient," by a British psychiatrist, Dr. Halliday. Halliday devaluates Carlyle's ideas because Carlyle was a psychoneurotic. Professor Edel denied that he had taken the viewpoint of Dr. Halliday, as Professor Green had suggested. The psychoanalytic approach should not be a reductive process.

Mrs. Rubinstein suggested that biography is always used in a psychological (Freudian) approach. No, replied Professor Edel, we have had papers that used a mere Freudian reading of the work itself. Edmund Wilson used Freudian symbolism, but not biography, in his analysis of "The Turn of the Screw."

Professor Edel responded in the affirmative to the question whether his paper was not designed to clarify the relationship between psychology and literary criticism. He was then asked if we can say where psychology is legitimately or illegitimately used. The lapse of time prevents the use of much biographical data in dealing with older writers. Professor Edel admitted that we cannot fully know all there is to be known about Elizabethan consciousness, language, or symbols, for example. What we can use depends on what evidence is available. The results tend to be speculative, but to say that is not to imply that they are necessarily invalid. In other sorts of criticism, other forms of speculation are used. Returning to Dr. Halliday's book, Professor Edel suggested that in it the author had used psychology as grist for his clinical conclusions, not for the purposes of literary criticism.

Mr. Hagopian expressed the opinion that fruitful literary criticism will be a combination of linguistics and psychology.

Mr. Lesser expressed his admiration of the paper as applied to criticism, but felt that, theoretically, its implications are mistaken. He felt that it would be well to avoid shifting to the viewpoint of what the book reveals about the author. Is there a necessary one-to-one relationship between the author's life and his work? It may be so here, but it is still a fact that a (psychologically) infantile man may dream mature dreams. The author may splinter himself among various characters. In any event, the literary critic does not have in the work what the psychoanalyst has or can get from the patient. Admitting that the novel breaks down at a certain point, we may ask why, without considering the neurotic basis for the breakdown through an analysis of the author's life. We want to focus our attention on the work itself. Let us remember that it is possible for a reader to respond fully to a work of fiction although he may lack what the student of that work has.

Mr. Lesser went on to express his approval of and preference for the second of the three types of approach described, despite Professor Edel's disapproval. Is it true that such an approach merely "labels" things? Our psychology is dynamic, not descriptive. Professor Edel has shown the organic

unity in the two stories which make up the content of the novel. He has, in effect, explained the response to the novel as well as the novel itself. The critic must use multiple means to get at the latent and manifest content of a work, for great works always have great latent content.

Professor Edel disagreed on three points only. He had not implied that there was a shift involved in the triple approach. It is simply a matter of examining different forms of approach and then using them appropriately. He had not intended to condemn or belittle the second approach, if properly used. He feared, however, that its use might result in the critic's projection of himself into the work. This may best be avoided by the more constructive method of finding out what the symbols mean to the writer. In this way objectivity, rather than subjectivity, may be attained.

Mr. A. H. Steinberg expressed his pleasure with the paper. He realized that we must not minimize the differences that exist among the various schools of depth psychology, but that problem is not encountered here. We sometimes feel that we want an approach, and we end with a diagnosis. The important thing to be stressed is the individual who uses the tools; even the biographical approach can be disastrous. The problem is, What is the legitimate way to use these tools? He suggests that the Conference attempt a project of phrasing the implications of psychology for literary criticism. This will involve summarization of the various schools of psychological thought, should not attempt to create a "code."

Mr. Lauter raised the question whether we really want to determine the meaning of the symbol to the artist? Can we do it for Eliot, for Thomas, for Whitman? Can a work of art ever be material for an analyst? Is not the procedure from work to artist to work essentially circular in nature? Another speaker suggested that the circle may be artist to work to artist. Professor Edel felt that it was impossible to plot a course so rigorously. We have seen critical reading becoming more and more careful. Beginning with an explication de texte, it has gone deeper and deeper.

Mr. Hagopian contended that the better the job the critic does, the nearer he will come to other critics, the clearer will the structure emerge as a literary "Gestalt". (Not every psychological critic may be a good critic, but every good critic will be to some extent a psychological critic. -- Chairman's comment)

Professor Rein returned to the negative criticism of the second type of critical approach embodied in the paper under discussion. Is not this type of criticism legitimate? Professor Edel responded that everything is legitimate in terms of what the critic finally gives us. Is Freudian symbolism really so rigid? asked Professor Rein.

Professor Griffin questioned the reason for our interest in the meaning of the symbols to the writer himself. To Professor Edel's comment that it stems from our interest in the creative process itself, Professor Griffin went on to assert that what the symbols could have meant or did mean to the author is interesting because of what they could or do mean to us, to a larger, human public.

Mr. Lesser objected to equating the psychoanalytic critic with the fixed-symbol approach. We have to know the dreamer -- or the artist. A

house may symbolize a womb in one case, an anxiety neurosis in another.

The discussion ended on a repetition of the warning against dogmatism, the expressed feeling that there is no encroachment as between the two disciplines if both are applied justly, and the expression of a consensus of opinion that some systematic attempt be made to clarify the issues raised at this meeting.

The Nominating Committee then presented its slate: for chairman, Leon Edel; for secretary-editor, Leonard F. Manheim; for members of the steering committee, Carvel Collins, William J. Griffin, and Simon O. Lesser. A unanimous ballot was cast for the slate. After a brief report by the editor on the present status of and future plans for the journal, the meeting adjourned.

L.F.M.

CHAUCER AS PSYCHOLOGIST IN TROILUS AND CRISEYDE

A narrative poet, in attempting to communicate within the limits of an aesthetic literary form some emotionally significant portion of the lives of human beings, must of course function to some extent as a psychologist, but we dare not forget that the poet is finally not a psychologist, that to a large degree his very function as a poet prevents him from performing scientific psychological analyses. The latter interprets human behavior; the former captures it. To be sure, since no artist can capture all aspects of human behavior, the poet's selection of details does imply an interpretation. But here we are faced with no mean problem, for the psychologist aims at simplification of life through analysis; the poet aims at presenting a sense of life's complexity through appropriate condensation while at the same time presenting fundamentally self-consistent characters in action. The poet does not explain the multifarious intricacies of human relationships; he organizes them into some aesthetic and balanced whole. It was no doubt some such realization that led T. S. Eliot to say, "I find that, in reading the work of a good poet, I am apt to be struck by a certain ambiguity. . . Where doubt about the attitude of the poet cannot arise, one is tempted to suspect the poetry." [1]

However, the critic may function as a psychologist in his study of the characters and situations which the poet presents and, thus, indirectly evaluate the condensation of life which the poem captures. Of course, the poet cannot be held responsible for the critic's psychological analysis — the poet merely provides him with the materials. It is precisely this approach that prevents us from accepting Kittredge's dictum that Troilus and Criseyde is a tale of chivalric love "with psychological analysis of emotion." [2] Chaucer has, quite the contrary, presented us with a highly complex synthesis of emotions.

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1 "The Social Function of Poetry," Critiques and Essays in Criticism, ed. R. W. Stallman (New York, 1949), p. 109.

2 Chaucer and his Poetry (Cambridge, 1915), p. 109. Underlining mine.

It is the view of Lionel Trilling that:

> . . . the whole notion of rich ambiguity in literature, of the interplay between the apparent meaning and the latent — not 'hidden' — meaning, has been reinforced by the Freudian concepts, perhaps even received its first impetus from them. Of late years, the more perceptive psychoanalysts have surrendered the early pretensions of their teachers to deal 'scientifically' with literature, and that is all to the good . . . not to 'solve' but only to illuminate the subject. [3]

Since there is no such creature as a completely unambiguous human being, much of the humanity of Chaucer's characters consists of their not being "types," simple personifications of abstract qualities. But, although Chaucer is a master of the implications and techniques of "amphibologies," I shall not attempt here to trace all the contradictions in the characters of Troilus and Criseyde. I shall limit myself to laying bare what seems to my sensibility to be the significant threads of character upon which these contradictions are strung. I propose to examine the personalities of Troilus and Criseyde with a special focus on Book IV, ll. 1128-1701, for I believe that we can best understand the core of consistency in their character traits at this most crucial moment of their relationship, their decision to allow Criseyde to leave the besieged Troy for the Grecian Camp.

The simple fact is that from the dialogue that concludes Book IV emerges a dominating Criseyde and a submissive Troilus. It is she who shapes the emotional tone and the practical plan of the discussion, while he feebly protests and finally succumbs to her will. All this is, of course, quite credible in the light of their personalities and behavior as we have seen them thus far in the story. The Troilus we have known is essentially immature, unsophisticated, and weak-willed. Let us remember that we first met him as a scoffer at lovers: "O verray fooles, nyce and blynde be ye!" (I,202) [4] Professor Patch shrewdly asks, "What is the significance of that in modern psychology? It shows him again personally insecure, personally unwilling to take the risk of a venture in love; by compensation he jeers. Wasn't he competent?" [5] Perhaps this is too harsh; perhaps Professor Patch should have at least noted that Troilus' compensation assumes a socially acceptable expression in the wielding of his sword on the field of battle.

After being smitten by love, Troilus ". . . called evere in his compleynte/ Hire name, for to tellen hire his wo,/ Til neigh that he in salte teres dreynte." (I,541-3) From that moment on, Troilus almost continuously weeps and wails, except for brief moments when Pandarus temporarily bring him to his senses or when he is achieving vicarious satisfaction in battle. Indeed, it is Pandarus who deserves all the credit for whatever romantic successes Troilus reaches; whenever Pandarus isn't about, Troilus fails. There is serious doubt that the Troilus we know could have

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3 "Freud and Literature," Horizon, XVI (September 1947), 195; reprinted in The Liberal Imagination (New York, 1951), pp. 34-57.

4 All quotations are from The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F. N. Robinson (New York, 1933).

5 Howard Rollin Patch, On Rereading Chaucer (Cambridge, 1939), p. 90.

gotten anywhere by himself. And, as Patch says, "apologies for him by appeal to courtly tradition won't serve; no normal man could endure such restrictions, certainly not a man of action. . . Even tradition doesn't explain his lassitude before his union with Criseyde." [6] Even Mark van Doren supports this view when he says that fools alone enjoy their grief, and he notes that Pandarus does not spare his friend the name of fool, infant, etc.; he is literally a brute with him. [7] "Thow wrecched mouse's herte,/ Artow agast so that she wol the bite?" (III,736-7)

Troilus' weak will is perhaps most clearly revealed in his utterly deterministic philosophy, which we see best in his Boethian meditation. He is constantly casting blame for his plight on the fates. Such a rejection of personal responsibility, a refusal to take the bull by the horns, makes him submissive to whatever mildly strong pressures are on him — to Pandarus' schemes for getting him into the relationship with Criseyde in the first place, and to Criseyde's scheme for getting out of it.

Perhaps the two references to Troilus' parents are not without some significance to our understanding of his personality. When Troilus first learns that Criseyde is to be exchanged for Antenor, he says:

> Why ne haddestow my fader, kyng of Troye,
> Byraft the lif, or don my brethren dye,
> Or slayn myself. . .? (II,276-78)
> . . . . . .
> . . . ende I wol, as Edippe, in derknesse. (II,300)

Among the classical references, besides the very significant one to Oedipus, are those that reveal Chaucer to be unusually conscious of strained family situations, especially those involving unusual parent-child relationships. "So bittre teeris weep nought. . ./ The woful Mirra through the bark and rynde." (IV,1138-39) This Myrrha was the daughter of Cinyras, son of Apollo, with whom she incestuously produced Adonis. [8] Criseyde swears that if she be false to Troilus, may she become "as wood as Athamante." (1539) This Athamas married one woman, loved another, and had children by both. Incurring the wrath of both women, he was seized with madness and killed his own son. [9] Criseyde swears by Lucinda that she'll return (1591). Lucinda is the goddess who presides over children. [10] Ah, the gentle Chaucer!

Thus, the family contexts that were significant to Chaucer's mind reinforce the supposition that Troilus may have been the victim of an Oedipal tie to his mother. Perhaps I am being overly subtle, but it is interesting in this connection that, although Troilus' father, Priam, is always in the background and sometimes actually on the scene, we have no hint of any warmth or affection between father and son. Troilus wouldn't dream of asking his father to intervene to keep Criseyde with him.

In contrast to the flabby Troilus, the Criseyde we know is a mature, sophisticated, strong-willed, skeptical young woman, motivated mainly by a strong concern for her own well-being and security. In addition, she

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6 Ibid., pp. 87-88
7 The Noble Voice (New York, 1946), p. 273.
8 A Smaller Classical Dictionary, ed. E. H. Blakeney, revised edition, (London, 1937), pp.1138-1139.
9 Ibid., p. 84
10 Ibid., p. 308.

seems to have a strong underlying antagonism toward men. Note her complete blackout of the memory of her dead husband, her handling of Hector, her haughtiness toward her father, her biting wit toward her beloved uncle, and, of course, her treatment of Troilus. Can we believe that she will ever be faithful to Diomede?

As with Troilus, the moment of Criseyde's introduction to the story offers us as good a clue to her personality; her first act was to fall on her knees before Hector, "with pitous vois, and tendrely wepynge/His mercy bad, hirselven excusynge." (I,111-12) She certainly knew the weaknesses of men and how to work on them in her own interest. We have here no brave and dramatic defense of her father, no shouts of defiance, but, instead, subtle submission. In church she reveals her true self: ". . . ful assured lokying and manere" (I,182) ". . . hire chere/. . . somdel deignous was, for she let falle/Hire look a lite aside in swich manere,/Ascaunces, 'What! may I nat sonden here?'" (I,290-92)

Unlike Troilus, she is her uncle's equal -- if she doesn't, indeed, surpass him -- in sharpness of wit during those utterly delightful, bantering by-plays. When Pandarus first goes to her as Troilus' ambassador, he asks if the book she is reading be of love, for he may learn something. She answers, "Uncle . . . youre maistresse is nat here!" (II,98) Her tone of address to him is significant: "How ferforth be ye put in love's daunce?" (II,1106) and "Nevere the bet for yow, Fox that ye ben!" (III,1564-65) [11].

After Pandarus tells her that Troilus is about to die for love of her, she says:

> Unhappes fallen thikke
> Alday for love, and in swych manere cas
> As men ben cruel in hemself and wikke;
> And is this man sle here hymself, allas!
> In my presence, it wol be no solas.
> What men wolde of hit deme I kan nat seye;
> It nedeth ful sloighly for to pleie (II,456-62)

Note the aloofness, the calculating quality of her response. She must consider this matter very carefully -- and there is one thing more that she must know for a proper balancing of the pro's and con's of the proposition: "Kan he wel speke of love?/. . . tel me, for I the bet me shal purveye." (II,503-4) Then follows her long analysis of the situation; the careful thought preceding her decision demonstrates how very strong are her rationality and her freedom of will. Her own self-analysis is of too great significance to be lightly glossed over:

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11 "Wit permits us to make everything ridiculous . . . affords us the means of surmounting restrictions and of permitting otherwise inaccessible pleasure sources . . . in hostile aggression. . . . Wit is well adapted as a weapon of attack upon what is great, dignified, and mighty, that which is shielded by internal hindrance or external circumstance against direct disparagement." Sigmund Freud, "Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious," in the Basic Writings, tr.and ed. by A. A. Brill (New York, 1938), pp. 698-99.

Now set a caas . . .
I am oon the faireste . . . in al the town of Troie.
I am myn owene womman, wel at ese,
I thank it God, as after myn estat,
Right yong, and stond unteyd in lusty leese,
Withouten jalousie or swich debat:
Shal noon housbonde seyne to me "chek mat!"
For either they ben ful of jalousie,
Or maisterfull, or loven novelrie . . .
Shal I nat love, in cas if that me leste?
. . . I am naught religious. (II,729-39)

For Criseyde, then, love is a game of chess, the check-mate is the pleasure to be derived, and there is to be no thought of giving of oneself, of submission, as she makes explicitly clear to Troilus later on:

"But natheles, this warne I yoe," quod she,
"A kynges sone although ye be, ywys,
Ye shal namore han sovereignete
Of me in love, than right in that cas is!" (III,169-72)

This Criseyde is adept in the psychological handling of others. She had already hit at her uncle's basic weakness, and now she gets at Troilus where he is most vulnerable -- his childish submission to a woman's mother-role: "Wol ye the childissh jalous contrefete?/Now were it worthi that ye were ybete." (III,1168-69)

At this point it is necessary to repeat that neither Troilus nor Criseyde is as simple as this kind of sketch makes them seem to be (although Criseyde is much more complex than Troilus), but these are the facets of their personalities that they bring to the separation scene and which, in fact, make such a scene credible in the terms in which Chaucer has presented it.

Let us now examine that scene. First of all, there is something peculiar about that abortive double-suicide development. If we didn't know Chaucer better, we would suspect that he was merely conforming with the dramatic tradition of courtly love stories; e.g., Chrétien's Lancelot, and if he was going to use it at all he had to get it in here before it was too late. But a closer examination reveals its very important psychological significance. The Criseyde we have known is no swooner -- indeed, has there ever been in English literature a woman further removed from the fleshless, fragile flowers of the Gothic novels? She is rather, as we have seen, a woman who knows how to employ feminine tactics to her own ends and who has a certain somewhat perverse sense of humor. Therefore, it is no strain on our imaginations to accept Mark van Doren's suspicion that her faint is a deliberate and calculated act.[12] Troilus' response is true to form: "his song ful ofte is 'weylaway'!" (I,1166), and, removed as his wit is from reality, he thinks she is dead and prepares to commit suicide (not without a farewell to his mother), but he takes a damnably long time about it. Naturally, Criseyde "wakes up" in time -- she hadn't meant her tactic to have precisely those results, though she intended and attained psychological control of the situation.

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12 van Doren, p. 268.

She then suggests that they go to bed and talk of their problem. Why the selection of the bed as a council table? (Is Criseyde a castrator?) Because it is precisely in bed that she can most securely dominate the poor boy, as she immediately does with an uninterrupted speech of some 161 lines, one of the longest dialogue speeches in the entire poem. Does she plan <u>with</u> him, as two people mutually involved in a desperate situation would? Does she seek his advice -- he, a trained and renowned soldier? Does she submit to him as a female to a male lover? Nonsense! She knows him too well for that. Once her swooning tactic has given her control of the situation and once she has him in bed, she poch-poohs all of his emotionalism, lays down the law, and, indeed, speaks to him as a mother would to a son -- clearly assured of her superiority:

> "Lo, herte myn, wel woot ye this," quod she,
> "That if a wight alwey his compleyn,
> And seketh nought how holpen for to be,
> It nys but folie and encrees of payne" (IV,1254-7)
> "I am a woman [how constantly aware she is of that, and of how to employ the fact in her own behalf]
> . . . nouther ye nor I
> Ought half this wo to maken, skilfully;
> For ther is art ynough for to redresse
> That yet is mys . . ." (IV,1261-66)

And then, very coolly and carefully, more as a logician than as a lover, she analyzes the situation to seek out all the factors that support her leaving Troilus:

> (1) The decision of the Parliament cannot be withstood.
> (2) Her departure is to be temporary -- only ten days.
> (3) The return of Antenor is worth her temporary absence.
> (4) Her honor and reputation must be upheld:
> "May ye naught ten dayes thanne abide
> For myn honour in swich an aventure?" (IV,1328-29)
> (5) There are abroad strong rumors of peace.
> (6) Even if peace isn't established, she can dominate and beguile her father in such a way as to arrange her return.
> (7) Too much faith must not be put in religious prophecies of doom, for "drede fond first goddes."

Now, to be sure, all her reasons may be quite sound and logical, but the significant fact is that her approach is <u>rational</u> rather than <u>emotional</u> -- as it has been throughout the story. She assumes and utilizes her freedom of will.

Her highly developed tactical skill may well have been born of necessity. She is, after all, a young widow forsaken by her father and living among a people whom her father has alienated by desertion to the enemy. She has a strong foundation for her drives for security; in any case, she is not a spring chicken lost in the barnyard.

How does Troilus respond when he "with herte and erys spradde/ Herde al this thyng devysen to and fro"? As usual, quick to anticipate defeat, preparing to feel sorry for himself, his first words are:

Certes, if ye be unkynde,
And but ye come at day set into Troye,
Ne shal I nevere have hele, honrur, ne joye. . .
I wol myselven sle if that ye drecche! (IV, 1440-46)

Compare the psychological strength of Criseyde's build-up for her arguments with this defeatist prelude. Troilus then attempts to answer her plan with a logic of his own:

(1) Your father will manage to keep you from returning to a city which he knows is doomed.
(2) "Ye shal ek seen so many a lusty knight/ Among the Grekis . . . that ye shal dullen of the rudenesse/ Of us sely Troians." (IV, 1485-90)
(3) Let us fly instead; I have kin and friends elsewhere who will see to it that we live in honor.

Troilus' arguments, precisely because they are half-heartedly presented, have a ring of desparate sincerity compared with Criseyde's calculated scholastical trickery. In the face of this, Criseyde can only protest on oaths — she swears in dozens of ways that she'll come back, and recapitulates her earlier arguments with a greater emotional intensity. Then she performs the most psychologically effective tactic of this entire crucial interplay — if not of the whole poem! She urges Troilus not to be unfaithful to her!

And over al this I prey yow, . . .
Syn I am thyn al hol, with outen mo,
That whil that I am absent, no plesaunce
Of oother do me fro youre remembraunce. (IV, 1639-43)

Was there ever a more manifestly unnecessary injunction? Of course, it has its intended effect, for Troilus immediately reassures her and succumbs to her wishes. Criseyde responds with a motherly "that's-a-good-boy" kind of flattery and says (oh, irony) that it was his "moral vertu" that first attracted him to her.

Thus ends the supremely decisive episode in the relationship between Troilus and Criseyde — an episode which could not have possibly been so conducted and terminated with any credibility had not Chaucer prepared us with magnificent artistic subtlety by weaving the appropriate elements into their complex personalities and behavior-patterns up to this point in the first psychological novel in the English Language.

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CORRESPONDENCE

From Mr. Idelle Sullens:

Herewith my renewal for Lit. and Psych. for 1955 — my third year. The publication continues to improve steadily in scope, and all the recent articles deserve wide dissemination. I find myself becoming a strong advocate of the approach of your contributors. Let us hope that it won't be too many years before a student can dare to use the word "psychology" in literary criticism without making a statement of qualification or apology. Your group's efforts are helping substantially toward this state of affairs.

From Professor William Rose, University of London. He refers to his address at the Sixth Triennial Congress of the International Federation for Modern Languages and Literatures (noted in Vol. IV, No. 4, September, 1954, at p. 64) and to his paper on "The Psychological Approach to Literature," referred to in Bibliography (XVI), Vol. IV, No. 5, November, 1954, at pp. 81-82, where the bibliographical reference is incomplete but is completed by the information which Professor Rose gives below.

> . . . I have now received the set of the News Letter and have read through the issues with much interest. Two or three of the articles contain valuable suggestions, and I shall find the bibliographies particularly useful.
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> The Festschrift in honour of Professor Willoughby is as follows:- German Studies. Presented to Leonard Ashley Willoughby. (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1952). With regard to my paper at the international congress last month, I do not know what arrangements are being made about publication, but I enclose a report which appeared in the local newspaper a day or two after I gave the paper. It reads a little disjointedly, since the reporter's aim, no doubt, was to pick out a few cogent paragraphs, but, as you may observe, the paper was based mainly on my article in the Festschrift.

Excerpts from an article in the Oxford Mail for September 15, 1954, captioned "Psychology as an Aid to Students":

> Prof. W. Rose, of the University of London, suggested in Oxford yesterday that the psychologist and the student of literature would both benefit by collaborating. . . .
>
> "Modern depth-psychology has opened our eyes to much of which we were previously unaware," he said. "We may accept as proven that the roots of any product of creative imagination reach below the conscious level." . . .
>
> "In sublimating his complex by artistic creation," said Prof. Rose, "he [the writer] does not rid himself of it for good. If he did, he would probably produce one masterpiece, and no more. Shakespeare would have written one sonnet, and not 154." . . .
>
> "The literary analyst who neglects the unconscious is unlikely to reach the heart of the matter, but the psycho-analyst who leaves the conscious out of account is no less in error." . . .
>
> We should not gain any worthwhile comprehension of poetic genius unless we had at our disposal some instrument which would give us the power to illumine the poet's mind.

Such an instrument was psycho-analysis. But we must go warily, for only in some of its aspects could psycho-analysis serve literary studies.

"All I have tried to do in this paper," concluded Prof. Rose, "is to suggest that the psychologists, who are engaged in studying human mind and feeling, and the students of literature, who are concerned with the creative products of that mind and feeling, may collaborate to their mutual advantage."

BIBLIOGRAPHY (XVII)

Bibliographical notes received from Professor William J. Griffin include the following:

1. Literature in the Modern World (Nashville, Tenn.: George Peabody College Bureau of Publications, 1954)

Professor Griffin edited the work, which consists of a series of lectures delivered at Peabody College. It contains

Carvel Collins, "Faulkner's Reputation and the Contemporary Novel,"

in which Professor Collins has something to say on psychology in Faulkner and the Freudian pattern in The Sound and the Fury. (See LITERATURE AND PSYCHOLOGY, Vol. III, No. 3, June, 1953, pp. 2-4.) Other lecturers represented are John Mason Brown, Edward Weeks, H. J. Sachs, Archibald MacLeish, Robert P. Tristram Coffin, Peter Viereck, Jesse Stuart, A. L. Crabb, Arna Bontemps, and Hodding Carter.

2. John A. Garraty, "The Interrelations of Psychology and Biography," Psych. Bull., LI, 6 (November, 1954), 569-582

As the title suggests, the article deals with the actual and reasonably possible applications of psychological knowledge and theory (including the insights of Freud et al.) to the writing of biography, but it also assesses the value that biographical records may have for students of psychology. It surveys (rather summarily) both objections to and defenses of the reciprocal applications. It also (still more summarily) reviews the history of such applications. For us, the most interesting aspects of the article are (1) its reminder that psychoanalysis is not the only aspect of modern psychological investigation that has significance for literary students and historians; (2) its brief descriptions of techniques of personality analysis that psychologists have worked out for drawing inferences from a writer's vocabulary and "style." The article is concluded by a list of 88 references, the most pertinent for us being:

Allport, G. W., "The Study of Personality by the Intuitive Method" (an experiment in teaching from The Locomotive God), Journ. of Abn. and Soc. Psych., XXIV (1919), 14-27

Allport, G. W., "The Use of Personal Documents in Psychological Science," Soc. Sci. Res. Coun. Bull. No. 49 (1929)

Allport, G. W. and P. E. Vernon, Studies in Expressive Movement (New York: Macmillan, 1933)

Anthony, Katherine, Margaret Fuller: A Psychological Biography (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1920)

Baldwin, A. L., "Personal Structure Analysis: A Statistical Method for Investigating the Single Personality," Journ. of Abn. and Soc. Psych., XXVII (1942), 163-183

Boder, D. P., "The Adjective-Verb Quotient: A Contribution to the Psychology of Language," Psych. Rec., III (1940), 310-343

Cantril, H., The Psychology of Social Movements (New York: Wiley, 1941)

Clark, L. P., "Unconscious Motives Underlying the Personalities of Great Statesmen. I. A Psychologic Study of Abraham Lincoln," Psa. Rev., VIII (1921), 1-21

Dollard, J. and O. H. Mowrer, "A Method of Measuring Tension in Written Documents," Journ. of Abn. and Soc. Psych., XLII (1947), 3-32

Gottschalk, L., C. Kluckhorn, and R. Angell, "The Use of Personal Documents in History, Anthropology and Sociology," Soc. Sci. Res. Bull. No. 53 (1945)

Sanford, F. H., "Speech and Personality: A Comparative Case Study," Char. and Pers., X (1942), 168-198

Trueblood, C. K., "Sainte-Beuve and the Psychology of Personality," Char. and Pers., VIII (1939), 120-143

White, R. K., "Black Boy: A Value Analysis," Journ. of Abn. and Soc. Psych. XLII (1947), 440-461

White, R. K., Value Analysis: The Nature and Use of the Method (Glen Gardner, New Jersey: Soc. for the Psych. Study of Social Issues, 1951)

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Dr. Mabel P. Worthington calls our attention to her dissertation:

Don Juan: Theme and Development in the Nineteenth Century (Microfilm, (Columbia, February, 1952)

The approach was: The Don Juan story embodies a myth, and the myth is defined in psychological terms.

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Over a half dozen people, among them Dr. Ruth Adams, have called our attention to

Malcolm Cowley, "Psychoanalysts and Writers," Harper's, Vol. 209, No. 1252 (September, 1954), pp. 87-93.

Dr. Adams comments on Mr. Cowley's "great indignation against a particular kind of psychiatric criticism. Some kinds of interpretation serve only to arouse this kind of ire, though some of it may be true enough — I sometimes object to this kind myself and wonder what value it has. We need to be pretty wise, I think in this field."

Your Editor has undertaken to reply briefly to Mr. Cowley in a letter, an excerpt from which follows:

I think you will agree that it is possible, at least for literary criticism to make use of psychoanalysis as a tool and at the same time avoid some of the excesses about which you complain with justice in your article. My only objection is that you depict the excesses as though they were the rule, and in that way you lend your name and influence to that type of pedantry and obscurantism which has for so long hampered any really just and balanced attempt to give new vigor and breadth to scholarly literary criticism. Perhaps it would be a good idea for you to examine the possible motives that led you to "throw out the baby with the bath water." You disingenuously open your article by referring to possible dynamic "resistance" on your own part, but you never take into account the one-sided, defensive mechanisms into which that resistance might -- and did -- lead you. Not the least of these is your own superficial "analysis" of the obvious characteristics which you find in the lives of certain writers whom you know.

Why, for instance, does one writer suffer from a sense of insecurity when his story is turned down by The Saturday Evening Post to such an extent that he develops a case of "writer's block," which only adds to his financial insecurity, while another writer will react to his checks and frustrations by increased literary activity, even herculean efforts to attain a high level of literary competence? One writer may be aided by a legacy, another forever ruined as a writer by the knowledge that he possesses a steady income. More description will not suffice when what we need is a more systematic account of why people, and that includes writers, function as "oddly" as they do.

It is not necessary for us to hold a particular brief for the writings which you single out for derision in order that we may insist that even these writers should be heard if they contribute anything to literary criticism. (For instance, I may express complete disagreement with Wormhoudt's interpretations of Ivanhoe and yet find that his case for the use of some sort of dynamic interpretation of literature in high school teaching would add what is sadly needed to make that level of teaching more meaningful to high school English students.) If you feel, perhaps justly, that psychoanalyst B. is regularly wrong in his investigation of the motivation of writers, that is no reason for refusing to give any consideration to the literary criticism of psychoanalyst K. And it certainly is no reason for casting aside the efforts of people whose interest in literary criticism is the same as yours, but who use tools that you may be unwilling or unable to use.

Why must you attach ethical overtones and social condemnation to the word "abnormal"? If you are a writer, you are abnormal in the sense that most people (and "most people" is just another way of saying "normal" people) are not writers. Normal and abnormal are statistically descriptive terms, not words of high praise or pejorative intent. If an "exhibitionist" displays his sex organs, he is at war with society and the law. If that "exhibitionism" results in the writing and publication of fiction, poetry, or even literary criticism, the drive which might have led to an anti-social act is directed toward the accomplishment of something which is usually considered socially valuable. (There are, of course, borderlines, like Mickey Spillane.)

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Dr. Morrill Moore bring us up to date by sending off-prints of recent articles by and about him and his work. (On second thought, considering Dr. Moore's indefatigable industry, we wonder whether "up to date" is valid for a communication dated November, 1954.)

1. Joseph Garland, M. D., "Doctors Afield: Morrill Moore," New England Journ. of Med., Vol. 251, pp. 230 et seq. (August 5, 1954)

Dr. Garland devotes four and a half pages to a bibliography of Dr. Moore's publications, alone and in collaboration, in medicine, psychiatry, and oncology (140 works), and an additional page to listing Moore's collected poetry, including publications in the United States, Great Britain, and New Zealand. (An amusing side-note is Dr. Garland's acknowledgement of permission to reprint the priceless Gorey illustration, "Dr. Morrill Moore Psychoanalyzes the Sonnet," not from the 1951 Case Record from a Sonnetorium, in which it originally appeared, but from the 1954 reprinting of Moore's sonnets by the Pegasus Press in Christchurch, New Zealand.)

2. Merrill Moore, M. D., "Alfred Adler -- Creative Personality," an address delivered before the Individual Psychology Association, at the Alfred Adler Memorial Meeting in New York, May 22, 1952

Dr. Moore stresses the fact that he approaches Adler as a poet rather than as a physician,

> ..,because the viewpoint of a poet permits better appraisal of the man as a creative personality; as one who has made something substantial that had not been before; and also as one who goes about his daily life continually expressing something creative in himself, as opposed to the destructive something.

The concluding paragraph of the address is worth quotation in full.

> If you go out from Cairo to Ghizeh, you will see one of the most remarkable sights of the ancient -- or modern -- world. First you will cross the Nile; then you will see a vast area of desert sand. Then you will see the ruins of the Sphinx and finally you will see three great pyramids, one built by Cheops, one by Chephron and one by Menkaura. These are all symbols to me; to me the Nile means the flow of time; the desert means human ignorance and waste; and the Sphinx means the problems of mankind. The three pyramids near it, to me represent the dynamic psychological structures built of words, in all the waste of sand, by Adler, Freud and Jung. Just as the pyramids were built thousands of years ago, so were these three great structures created toward the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. We are still building all of them and I believe that Adler's structure will last as long as Cheops', although its form may change somewhat to meet the needs of the times, which Cheops' unyielding structure never did. Let us hope, at any rate, that Adler's will, and that his followers will labor together toward that goal, and see to it that the pyramid itself never becomes the tomb of the builder.

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The Bibliography Committee of the MLA Group on Literature and Science (G.T.VII), from whose 1953 listing we quoted in Bibliography (XIII), Vol. IV, No. 1, (February, 1954), pp. 8,9, has now issued a similar listing for 1954. Edited by Kester Svendsen and Samuel I. Mintz, the Bibliography, originally published in Vol. VIII, No. 1, of Symposium, lists the papers in LITERATURE AND PSYCHOLOGY for 1953, and the following additional items of special interest to our readers:

Bergler, E., "Can the writer 'resign' from his calling?" Int. Journ. of Psa., XXXIV, 40-42

Margetts, E. L., "The concept of the unconscious in the history of medical psychology," Psychiatric Quarterly, XXVII, 115-38

Trolliet, G., "Langage et affectivité," Rev. de Suisse, II (1952), 74-75

Devereux, G., "Why Oedipus killed Laius: a note on the complementary Oedipus complex in Greek drama," Int. Journ. of Psa., XXXIV, 132-41

Fisher, K. A., "Psychoanalysis: a dialogue," Psychoanalysis, I, 17-30

Shapiro, K., "Poets and psychologists," Poetry, LXXX (1952), 166-84

Malo, R., "From the innermost germ: the organic principle in Hawthorne's fiction," ELH, XX, 218-36

Mazzitelli, M., I Promessi Sposi Visiti da un Medico (Roma, Signorelli, 1952)

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We have not yet been able to attempt systematic searching of the university quarterlies and other "little" journals. The fact that their papers on literary criticism may well have much material in which we would be interested is evidenced by a chance examination of a not-too-recent issue of New Mexico Quarterly. It has

Stanley Edgard Hyman, "Melville the Scrivener," Vol. XXIII, No. 4 (Winter, 1953), pp. 381-415.

The paper is a stimulating as Professor Hyman always is, and it ends with the following provocative paragraph:

> If all these basic questions about Melville, from his view of the absolute to his sexual leanings, are unanswerable, and if Melville is like Shakespeare ultimately unknowable, it is due to our inability to penetrate this mask, which is simply the mask or persona of art. Behind it the artist sits in darkness and anonymity, perhaps, as Joyce suggests, paring his nails. "Strike through the mask," Ahab exhorts us. How can we? Why in fact should we? In the last analysis it is the mask itself we want, and the face we see mirrored in it can only be our own.

Any comments?

[Membership roll will appear in the last issue for the year.]